

### Let Us Ascend

My Brothers and Sisters in the Risen Lord,

This Sunday we celebrate the Ascension of the Lord—a moment both mysterious and magnificent. Imagine standing on that hillside with the disciples, watching Jesus rise into the sky, not vanish, not fade—but rise, in his glorified body, ascending into heaven. Can you feel their awe? Their wonder? Maybe even their confusion?

All three readings today give us different angles of this incredible event. In Acts we see Jesus giving his final instructions before being lifted up. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians proclaims Christ as enthroned in glory, seated at the right hand of the Father, far above every power and authority. And in the Gospel of Mark, we're reminded that Jesus commissions his followers—us—to go and preach the Gospel to the whole world and that signs will accompany those who believe.

But here's something worth pausing over: Jesus didn't just disappear. He ascended. He didn't float away like some magic trick—he rose, body and soul, into heaven. As theologian Peter Kreeft points out, “the physical direction of Christ's Ascension is significant.” That word “significant” starts with “sign.” Jesus's movement upward is a sign, pointing to something greater. It's not just about location; it's about destination. It tells us where we are meant to go.

Think about that for a moment. Have you ever considered heaven not just as a hope but as your true home? Not a vague spiritual place but a real one, where Jesus, in his glorified body, now dwells?

Christianity has always been both physical and spiritual. Jesus was born into our world with a real body. He touched the sick and healed them. He wept. He suffered. He bled. He rose from the dead—not as a ghost but in a glorified body that ate fish and bore the marks of the nails. And now he ascends in that same body.

What does this mean for you?

It means your body matters. Your daily life, your struggles, your joys—they matter. It means heaven isn't some abstract idea; it's a promised reality. And it means that we are not meant to stand around, staring at the sky, but to go out and live the mission Jesus left us: to witness to his love, to be his hands and feet in the world, to prepare our hearts for the day he returns.

The Ascension isn't the end of the story; it's the beginning of our chapter. Jesus goes to prepare a place for us, but he also sends us the Holy Spirit so we're not alone. He is with us, still working through us, drawing us upward, onward. So today, don't just commemorate the Ascension, enter into it. Let it lift your thoughts, your hopes, your life.

As St. Augustine said so beautifully: “Today our Lord ascended into heaven. Let us ascend with him.”

Yours in Christ,  
Fr. Rudy